

March 1, 2012

Mr. Barry Clegg, Chair Minneapolis Redistricting Group Room 304, City Hall 350 S 5th St Minneapolis, MN 55415

**RE:** Redistricting Draft Map for Public Hearing

Dear Mr. Clegg and Redistricting Group Members:

The North Loop Neighborhood Association has reviewed the draft maps that have been posted for public hearings. The neighborhood requests that the group recognize that the North Loop Neighborhood had the largest growth of all Minneapolis neighborhoods from the last census data. This neighborhood has been a growing community throughout its history, especially with many new residential buildings, families moving into the neighborhood, and riverfront development. We represent a strong downtown community of interest. We are now a vibrant residential neighborhood, no longer just an industrial community.

The draft map issued shows our neighborhood split into three separate wards. Historically, our neighborhood has been split between two wards. This has not been a positive experience for us. We have strongly fought to unite our neighborhood, even with large physical barriers such as the 394 and 94 viaducts standing in the way. Many residents and business members have been working for varied interests in our neighborhood. This will only get more complicated by splitting the neighborhood into fractured zones between three wards.

There is also a significant burden by both representatives and residents alike. These include administrative costs borne by the council members, their staff, and city resources to duplicate neighborhood efforts amongst multiple wards. Residents often find it difficult to find polling places and become discouraged by the voting process as it becomes more complicated. An inherent confusion is built into the current draft map with trying to associate leadership within our neighborhood. We strive for an efficient and effective government for the community.

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Now is the time to recognize the importance of unifying this diverse community. We have many transitional residents in the lower north loop's established caring community, the stadium district, farmer's market district, high-rise and town-home residences, and many entertainment businesses. The confluence of light rail, heavy rail, future streetcars, buses and the planned county intermodal station demonstrate the investment in transit oriented development in the years to come within the neighborhood. We are truly an urban village. Only together as residents united within one community of interest can we empower our residents. But, being empowered requires having a common representative.

Establishing a consistent and stable representative to the City Council of Minneapolis is a goal paramount to our interests. The draft map as prepared imposes arbitrary boundaries within the neighborhood and overall invalidates our efforts to unify.

Particularly the neighborhood wishes the group to consider redrawing the lines to include our neighborhood within one ward. If possible, we would like to join the larger downtown community. Together the downtown area has many similar issues including high density, urban neighborhoods, associated public safety, transit oriented focus, traffic congestion, sports and entertainment focus, mixed-use zoning, and the quick transformations that occur within a downtown core.

We appreciate the work that the group is doing, understand that it will not be possible to satisfy all citizens, while striving to create a meaningful ward outline for the years to come. The North Loop Neighborhood does not support the draft maps issued and requests the Redistricting Group consider uniting the North Loop Neighborhood and placing it within one ward.

We are vigilant, strong, and united in our request to the group.

Sincerely,

David R. Frank

North Loop Neighborhood Association